

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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R 130130Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6169
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 10593

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECON, EAIR, ELAB, ID
SUBJECT: GARUDA TO HIRE ADDITIONAL AMERICAN PILOTS TO RELIEVE PILOT
SHORTAGE

REF: A) JAKARTA 10523, B) JAKARTA 10322, C) JAKARTA 10153

1. PAN AM MANAGER FOR INDONESIA CALLED EMBOFF 10 AUGUST TO FOLLOW UP CONVERSATION REPORTED REF A REGARDING AN APPARENT WORK SLOWDOWN AMONG GARUDA PILOTS (REF B). PAN AM MANAGER SAID HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY LOCAL MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS REPRESENTATIVE THAT GARUDA MANAGEMENT WAS BRINGING IN QUOTE A LARGE NUMBER UNQUOTE OF AMERICAN PILOTS UNDER CONTRACT WITH MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS IN ORDER TO FILL IN FOR GARUDA PILOTS REPORTING ABSENT FOR SCHEDULED FLIGHTS.

2. EMBOFF LATER CONFIRMED ESSENCE OF PAN AM MANAGER'S REPORT WITH MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS REPRESENTATIVE, WHO ADDED ADDITIONAL DETAILS. MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS OPERATION IN INDONESIA CONSISTS MOSTLY OF FLIGHT AND SERVICE CREW TRAINING AND
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TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM FOR THE GARUDA FLEET OF DC-8S,

DC-9S, AND DC-10S. FOR SOME TIME, GARUDA HAS BEEN WORKING AGAINST A TIGHT PILOT COMPLEMENT FOR ITS DC-9 FLEET USED MOSTLY ON DOMESTIC ROUTES. FLIGHT CAPTAINS ARE IN SHORTEST SUPPLY. UNTIL ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL ARE GRADUATED FROM TRAINING SCHOOL, GARUDA HAS LITTLE FLEXIBILITY TO ADJUST FOR POSSIBLE PILOT ABSENCES, OR EVEN FOR NORMAL LEAVE-TAKING.

3. PERSONNEL SCHEDULING PROBLEMS WERE IMMEDIATELY EXACERBATED LAST MONTH WHEN THREE DC-9 PILOTS WERE ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF GOLD SMUGGLING (REF C) AND SOME 27 PILOTS HAVE BEEN DETAINED AT VARIOUS TIMES FOR QUESTIONING, FURTHER DISRUPTING PILOTS' SCHEDULES. THIS, ACCORDING TO M-D REPRESENTATIVE, FORCED GARUDA TO ARRANGE HIRING OF FOUR ADDITIONAL AMERICAN PILOTS FROM MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE FOR DUTY NEXT WEEK. MCDONNELL- DOUGLAS HAS TEN PILOTS ALREADY FLYING FOR GARUDA. EXCEPT FOR A FEW BASED IN JAKARTA, MOST ARE BASED IN SINGAPORE. THEY NORMALLY ALTERNATE BETWEEN THREE-MONTH FLIGHT DUTY AND ONE MONTH HOME LEAVE IN LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA.

4. COMMENT: WHATEVER LABOR PROBLEMS GARUDA MAY BE FACING, THEY HAVE BEEN DEPT LOW-KEY. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF MANPOWER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MANPOWER HAS CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY ILLEGAL "WORK ACTIONS" ON THE PART OF GARUDA EMPLOYEES, AND THE INDONESIAN PRESS DOES NOT PUBLISH ARTICLES ON ILLEGAL WORK STOPPAGES OR SLOWDOWNS. EMBASSY IS NOT YET AWARE OF ANY COMPLAINTS BY AMCITS OR OTHER ABOUT DISRUPTED DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS.

5. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO MONITOR THIS EMPLOYMENT OF ADDITIONAL AMERICAN PILOTS UNDER CONFUSED, IF NOT SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES ESPECIALLY WHILE INDONESIAN PILOTS' PAST COMPLAINTS ABOUT PAY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND AMERICAN PILOTS APPARENTLY GO UNRESOLVED. NEWSOM

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